Listing of the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows and replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in the application with the following listing of claims:

1-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A method for providing simultaneous context based audio interaction among a plurality of participants in a network based gaming environment, the method comprising:

establishing a network based game environment containing ~~a~~ identifications for a plurality of game participants;

maintaining a game state profile for each one of the game participant identifications;

using the game state profiles to identify a plurality of groups of participant identifications, each group comprising a plurality of participant identifications having a shared game context within the game state profiles that permits audio communication among the game participants associated with those participant identifications; ~~and~~

establishing a plurality of ~~concurrent~~ simultaneous and independent voice over internet protocol based audio conferences within the ~~same~~ network based game environment, each audio conference associated with one of the identified groups of participant identifications and permitting audio communication for the participants associated with the associated group of participant identifications; and

identifying a feature vector between each pair of participants in each audio conference, each feature vector comprising direction and distance information between a given pair of participants; and

using the feature vectors to modify audio signals exchanged between pairs of participants within a given audio conference ~~among the game participants based upon the game state profiles, each voice over internet protocol based audio conference comprising two or more game participants having one or more shared game contexts~~.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of maintaining a game state profile comprises maintaining a game state profile for each participant in a single centralized game server.

15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of maintaining a game state profile comprises maintaining a game state profile for each participant in each one of a plurality of distributed game servers associated with each participant.

16. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of establishing an audio conference comprises establishing a session initiation protocol based voice over internet protocol based audio conference.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 13~~7~~, further comprising modifying one of the groups of participants based upon changes in the game state profiles of game participants in the group.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the step of modifying the group of participants comprises removing participants or adding participants from the audio conference associated with that group of participants.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 13~~7~~, further comprising dynamically switching at least one participant between two distinct groups.

22. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of establishing an audio conference comprises delivering an audio signal to each audio conference participant that comprises

the sum of all received audio signals from all other audio conference participants.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~2~~1~~3~~, wherein the audio feature vector comprises information about distance, direction, communication medium, transmission frequency or transmission amplitude.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~2~~1~~3~~, further comprising modifying the audio feature vector in response to changes in the game state profiles of the audio conference participants.

26. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium containing a computer executable code that when read by a computer causes the computer to perform a method for providing simultaneous context based audio interaction among a plurality of participants in a network based gaming environment, the method comprising:
establishing a network based game environment containing ~~a~~ identifications for a plurality of game participants;
maintaining a game state profile for each one of the game participant identifications;
using the game state profiles to identify a plurality of groups of participant identifications, each group comprising a plurality of participant identifications having a shared game context within the game state profiles that permits audio communication among the game participants associated with those participant identifications; ~~and~~
establishing a plurality of ~~concurrent~~ simultaneous and independent voice over internet protocol based audio conferences within the ~~same~~ network based game environment, each audio conference associated with one of the identified groups of participant identifications and permitting audio communication for the participants associated with the associated group of participant identifications; and
identifying a feature vector between each pair of participants in each audio conference.

each feature vector comprising direction and distance information between a given pair of participants; and

using the feature vectors to modify audio signals exchanged between pairs of participants within a given audio conference ~~among the game participants based upon the game state profiles, each voice over internet protocol based audio conference comprising two or more game participants having one or more shared game contexts~~.

27. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 26, wherein the step of maintaining a game state profile comprises maintaining a game state profile for each participant in a single centralized game server.

28. (Withdrawn) The computer readable medium of claim 26, wherein the step of maintaining a game state profile comprises maintaining a game state profile for each participant in each one of a plurality of distributed game servers associated with each participant.

29. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 26, wherein the step of establishing an audio conference comprises establishing a session initiation protocol based voice over internet protocol based audio conference.

30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 26~~30~~, further comprising modifying one of the groups of participants based upon changes in the game state profiles of game participants in the group.

32. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium of claim 31, wherein the step of modifying the group of participants comprises removing participants or adding participants from the audio conference associated with that group of participants.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 2630, further comprising dynamically switching at least one participant between two distinct groups.

35. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 26, wherein the step of establishing an audio conference comprises delivering an audio signal to each audio conference participant that comprises the sum of all received audio signals from all other audio conference participants.

36. (Canceled)

37. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 326, wherein the audio feature vector comprises information about distance, direction, communication medium, transmission frequency or transmission amplitude.

38. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 326, further comprising modifying the audio feature vector in response to changes in the game state profiles of the audio conference participants.